

# HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS CHURCH



BROWN STREET

Between Washington and Adams Streets

KNIGHTSTOWN, INDIANA

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1876-1976





# HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS CHURCH



This book is dedicated to all FRIENDS who have served Knightstown Monthly Meeting and have gone on to receive the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

KNIGHTSTOWN, INDIANA

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1876-1976

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another,  
as I have loved you. Ye are my friends, if ye do  
whatsoever I command you". John 15:12,14



## OUR CHURCH IN 1911

Brown Street, between Washington and Adams Streets

Furnished in modern style with art glass windows,  
lighted with electric lights, and heated  
by furnace

## QUAKER YESTERDAYS

A hundred years, plus fifty more  
Have brought us to this hour;  
To think about the days of yore  
When Quaker faith did flower.

The early days were marked with joy,  
A joy that knew no measure,  
And everywhere the Quakers went  
They found 'peculiar' treasure.

Their way of life was simple quite;  
Their meeting houses plain-  
But they were staunch for doing right;  
From sin they did abstain.

They spoke the plainest thou's and thee's;  
Their speech with salt was seasoned-  
With horny hands they cut the trees,  
For 'twas God's will they reasoned.

Their dress was plain, their address too;  
They frowned on worldly pleasure.  
Frivolity they felt to rue  
Their lives by Christ to measure.

The Word of God their daily food,  
The promises they cherished;  
They felt their lives must count for good  
And evil thoughts must perish.

And now these early friends have gone,  
But still there lingers ever  
A challenge to the work begun  
And purpose to endeavor.

Our call is clear, the task is near,  
And though the way is hidden,  
With courage high we'll never fear,  
But do what He has bidden.

Kenneth Pickering  
January 15, 1970

## FOREWORD

The committee on church history has endeavored to prepare a history for the church members, present and future, that will give them a spiritual insight into the past as well as a record of the achievements, goals, leaders, and pastors of the church. To that end, we have included the history written by Sophia Keys which records events until 1911. In preparing the history from that time until the present, we have hoped to keep it brief enough that those trying to locate certain material can readily find the information sought and also that those with limited time can obtain a knowledge of our church. To this end, we have divided the history into a chronological record of the various pastors and their influences and a general summary of the departments and their accomplishments. We realize that many contributions of church leaders, changes in the physical plant, and spiritual concerns that have influenced worship have been omitted. These can be found in more detail in the records of the minutes of the Monthly Meeting. In the reading of these minutes we have received spiritual inspiration, and we hope that our brief summary of these records may convey to our readers the devotion and dedication evidenced by people who were lay members just as we are.



CHARTER MEMBERS  
of Knightstown Meeting 1876

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The Knightstown Preparative Meeting of Friends was opened 4th month 20th, 1876, with 46 charter members, whose names are as follows:

Dr. Wilson Hobbs	David W. Douglas
Zalinda Lynch Hobbs	Lydia M. Douglas
Orville W. Hobbs	Ithamer W. Stuart
Mary Z. (Hobbs) Davis	Margaret Stuart
Walton C. Hobbs	Laura A. (Stuart) Morrison
Charles M. Hobbs	John E. Keys
Fannie B. Hobbs	Sophia L. Keys
Robert W. Hobbs	Harry E. Keys
Harry L. Hobbs	James Beeman
Mary B. Charles	William Penn Beeman
Elizabeth Deem	Margaret I. (Beeman) Haines
Benajah Parker	Ruth Stratton
Deborah Ann Parker	Lemuel Murray
Allen T. Kirk	Abigal D. Murray
Lucinda E. Kirk	Tacy Shoemaker
Anna M. (Kirk) Sample	Albert W. Aiken
Catherine Morrison	Grace D. (Tatner) Aiken
William G. Edwards	Caleb M. Pelle
William Kearns	Maria Pelle
Elizabeth Kearns	Frank H. Pelle
Rebecca J. (Kearns) Midkiff	Walter Pelle
Nathan T. Coffin	Louisa Pelle
Jennie Coffin	Mary Frederick



PASTORS AND CLERKS OF  
KNIGHTSTOWN MONTHLY MEETING 1910-1976

PASTORS

Esther Cook	1910
Willis Bond	1914
Zeno Doan	1916
J. Edward Hartsuck	1923
Adelbert Wood	1928
Franklin Chant	1929
George Bird	1931
Kenneth Pickering	1938
Albert Copeland	1943
John Randolph	1945
Byron Leaser	1948
Mervin Kilmer	1964
Keith Mardock	1972
Gene Lewis	1975

CLERKS

Cora Harold	1911
Dossie Byrket	1912
Cora Harold	1913
Mabel Woodard	1914
Horace Woodard	1918
Edward Kreitzer	1919
Florence Hoffman	1924
T. R. Woodard	1926
Grant Hinshaw	1927
Dossie Byrket	1928
Minnie Thornberg	1933
Edith Bell	1936
Ola Pickett	1937
Steven Kiplinger	1945
Warren Edwards	1946
Alvin Hardin	1959
Joseph White	1971

## HISTORY OF THE KNIGHTSTOWN CHURCH FROM 1876 TO 1911

The name of Dr. Wilson Hobbs is closely identified with the early history of the Friends Church in Knightstown, Indiana. He moved here in July, 1873. He soon became convinced that there was enough of that faith to act as a nucleus around which to fashion a church. Early in the winter of 1873, shortly before the holidays, he called a meeting in his office. There were present at this meeting: -- Dr. Wilson Hobbs, Mary B. Charles, Ithamer W. Stuart, Margaret Stuart, William G. Edwards, Catherine Morrison, Allen T. Kirk, Lucinda E. Kirk and John E. Keys, to talk over the advisability of establishing a Friends meeting in Knightstown. We felt Dr. Hobbs was led by the Spirit. We readily and cheerfully united our forces and for a few times met in his office for prayer and guidance. We found that other Christian denominations were interested in us and our mission and granted us the use of their churches for worship a few times.

We were united in asking Raysville Monthly Meeting for an indulged meeting, which was granted, and a room was immediately rented in the Reeves block early in 1874, now known as the G.A.R. Hall. Friends met on the first day of the week at 3:15 p.m., also on Fourth day evening at 7 p.m. for worship. William G. Edwards was appointed Elder and was recognized as the head of the meeting. Dr. Wilson Hobbs, Zalinda L. Hobbs, Catherine Morrison, Ithamer W. Stuart and Margaret Stuart also sat with him at the head of the meeting. All this number and also all our first elders and overseers, Clerk, Assistant Clerk and the Treasurer have since been called home to receive their reward. Their zeal and loyalty to Christ and the church, as we look back upon their lives, was

simply grand. Yet all was clothed in such simple acts of kindness, their good advice and words of encouragement given here and there, and when duty called them they seemed (to us) to go without effort. None but they know of the pleading with God for light and leading. The burdens laid upon their hearts for others, were quietly and dutifully performed and God blessed them. There are people here today, living in the light of God's love and blessings, who owe much to those faithful Friends for their good advice and wise counsel and sweet persuasion, whose memory we honor today. Let us take unto ourselves the great lessons from their lives and characters, and put them into practical use here in our church and community, and thereby be truer friends and purer Christians, doing with our might what our hands find to do in the uplifting and building of our church, that it may grow and become a shining light for God, and all that comes within her doors may find the sweet peace and rest that belongeth to the people of God. Let us be ready as they were when we hear the Master say, "It is enough; come up higher."

Only fourteen of the charter members of this meeting are now living, as far as we know. Eight of this number reside in Knightstown.

For a few months we were strengthened by the ministry of Mary H. Rogers. Later David W. Douglas of Maine came and remained with us until after the erection of the church building, proving helpful, both spiritually and temporally. A committee was appointed consisting of Dr. Wilson Hobbs, John E. Keys and William G. Edwards, to locate and secure a lot on which to erect a church building. The lot was bought and the present church was built during the summer and fall of 1875. John I. Morrison and Harvey Burt were added to the building committee. John E. Keys is now the only living member of the committee that built this house.

An extract was received at the Raysville Monthly Meeting 3rd month 25th, 1876, from the

Spiceland Quarterly Meeting informing it that they united in granting the establishment of a preparative meeting at Knightstown, as requested by Raysville Monthly Meeting and directed that the meeting be opened at the time for holding the meeting for worship and preparative meeting in 4th month 20th, 1876, at 7 p.m., which was at our regular prayer meeting on 5th day evening. This is the date of our organization and according to the monthly meeting record we are to be known as the "Knightstown Meeting of Friends."

The quarterly meeting appointed Seth Stafford, Caleb Johnson, Jabes H. Henly, Jane Ratcliff, Mary Saint, Refina White, Francis W. Thomas, Rebecca Hiatt, Jason Williams, Rebecca Thomas and Mary H. Rogers to act in conjunction with a like committee appointed by Raysville Monthly Meeting to attend the opening, namely, William Haughton, Isaac Parker, Charles S. Hubbard, and Joseph Pritchard. They also proposed the names of Ithamer W. Stuart, Nathan T. Coffin, Lucinda E. Kirk and Elizabeth Kearns for overseers, with whom the monthly meeting united, held 4th month, 22nd, 1876, and they were accordingly appointed to that station, with William G. Edwards as clerk, Jennie Coffin, assistant, and Allen T. Kirk as treasurer of the preparative meeting. At this time we had a membership of 46, twelve of whom were under 21 years of age. We all were members of Raysville Monthly Meeting prior to the establishment of Knightstown Preparative Meeting, 35 years ago. At the opening of our preparative meeting the time for worship was changed for holding our First day meeting from 3:15 p.m. to 10:30 a.m. Our First day evening meeting was first held 11th month, 1877. This is not a recorded meeting.

In 4th month 23rd, 1876, our church was dedicated by the late David B. Updegraff, assisted by John Henry Douglas and David W. Douglas. At the monthly meeting held 5th month 26th, 1877, a committee was appointed to revise the list of elders.



They appointed William G. Edwards and Margaret Stuart as elders for Knightstown Preparative Meeting. These were our first elders.

The early members of this meeting have passed through some very dark and trying times. After our meeting house was dedicated there was a shrinkage on our subscription list on account of the panic of 1876, causing an indebtedness on the church building. Ithamer W. Stuart and Lemuel Murray, members of this meeting, borrowed the money from the bank for the full amount of this indebtedness at 11 per cent interest. Our meeting, to make them secure, deeded them the church property. Our membership at that time was poor and few in number and not able to pay the interest which had accumulated until the total amount of interest and principal was fifteen hundred dollars. Mr. Stuart and Mr. Murray became uneasy. Then a Catholic priest came to them and offered to buy our church building. It seemed to them this was the only way to pay off the note in the bank. This was a gloomy hour for the Knightstown meeting, when the clouds were so dark and heavy that we could scarcely believe they had a silver lining. Sometimes we think the present generation would sink under such burdens. But God in His infinite love and because of our faith, turned the clouds into brightest sunshine, and the church grew in grace and in knowledge of the Master, and today we stand as it were, shoulder to shoulder with the churches of our town.

Raysville Monthly Meeting held 1st month 27th, 1877, gave our meeting the first ray of hope, by authorizing Isaac Parker and Samuel Pritchard, trustees of Raysville Monthly Meeting, to sell the old "Elm Grove" meeting house and grounds, "as that meeting had been laid down by the sanction of the quarterly meeting," and the monthly meeting proposed to use the proceeds toward relieving the indebtedness incurred by Friends of Knightstown in building their meeting house, which is within the limits of Raysville Monthly Meeting.

At Raysville Monthly Meeting, held 11th month 24th, 1877, the trustees reported that they had sold the Elm Grove meeting house for two hundred and fifty dollars and appropriated the funds as directed.

John E. Keys asked for thirty days time to see if the rest of the money could be raised. He visited White Water Quarterly Meeting held at Richmond, Indiana, and met with some encouragement, also at Walnut Ridge and Carthage meetings, thereby cutting down the indebtedness to nearly nine hundred dollars. He also visited our own quarterly meeting at Spiceland on Seventh day, where he made a statement of our financial difficulties. Amos M. Kenworthy, then of Westfield, Indiana, arose and said, "Let the meeting proceed with the business. I will pay off the indebtedness of Knightstown meeting myself. No Catholic priest can buy the Knightstown Friends Church, for there is a place in Knightstown for a Friends meeting." On the following 2nd day Amos M. Kenworthy came to Knightstown and arranged with the bank and Lemuel Murray and Ithamer W. Stuart to pay off the remainder of the indebtedness, which then amounted to a little over nine hundred dollars. Amos returned to Hamilton County, sold his home, and came back and paid off the debt on our church. By unanimous consent of the members of our meeting, we deeded Amos all of the ground lying east of the church building, with the exception of two feet. This was all our meeting had to give in return for his generous gift to us. We feel our church owes a debt of gratitude to Amos M. Kenworthy that we never can repay, for he made darkness light before us and crooked things straight. The Lord, in a miraculous way, provided the means for Amos to build him a cottage home on the ground our meeting gave him. He served for a time as our pastor. New hope and life came to the little Knightstown meeting under his ministry, assisted by his

Christian wife, Phebe H. Kenworthy. During the revival of 1881, held by him, there were 30 persons who were added to our membership. A real spiritual uplift came to us all.

Amy Fulghum, who was much beloved, accepted a call to serve as our pastor during 1884. She held a revival early in the year of 1886, assisted by Emma S. Garritson. This revival was much noted for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. During this revival 67 members were added to our church at the monthly meeting held 2nd month 27th, 1886. In all, 91 members were added to Knightstown meeting during that year. Emma S. Garritson remained here and assisted Amy Fulghum in the pastoral work of our meeting until 5th month of 1887.

Joseph O. Binford, beloved by all our membership, came on call to serve as our pastor, 1st month, 1893. He soon opened a series of revival meetings, assisted by John Pennington. Thirty-three members were added to this meeting. During the same year seventy-five members were added to our church. These have been the three marked periods of revivals in the history of our Knightstown meeting of Friends, when God's Spirit came upon the church with such wonderful power. Many who have joined our meeting during these three noted revivals are active members and doing much good for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God, while many of this number are now on the other shore, whose memory we still revere for their untiring efforts to assist in building up the cause of Christ.

While our church has not increased so much in numbers during any revival or year since the above dates, yet there has been a steady growth, both spiritually and temporally. Our meeting has been blessed with excellent ministers from its earliest organization to the present time. While some have not been as successful as others in gathering into the church yet they have sown good seed and others

have done the reaping, yet all have done the best they could and none have been failures, and many of these pastors whose wise counsel and pastoral care will never be forgotten.

Samuel C. Mills is the only minister who died while pastor of this meeting. His work among us was satisfactory.

The names of all ministers who have served as pastors of Knightstown meeting are as follows: -- Mary H. Rogers, David W. Douglas, Henry Merrill, Amos M. Kenworthy, Seth C. Rees, Amy Fulghum, Emma S. Garritson, Alfred Brown, Joseph O. Binford, Samuel C. Mills, Minnie Bassett, Morton C. Pearson, Elbert Russell, Oscar Moon, S. Adelbert Wood, Levi T. Pennington, Frank B. Rhodes and Esther Cook, our present pastor, beloved by us all and who is doing much good for the upbuilding of the cause of Christ.

Our Bible School was first organized in the spring of 1874 in the G.A.R. Hall, while we were yet an indulged meeting, with William G. Edwards as superintendent. There were two classes organized, with Mary Z. Hobbs Davis and John E Keys as teachers. Attendance, 21. The monthly meeting record shows that in 9th month 23rd, 1876, we had an average of about one hundred scholars.

Our Young People's Christian Endeavor was organized in 4th month 10th, 1889, with a membership of 25.

The Junior and Intermediate C. E. Society was organized 11th month 6th, 1892, with 15 members.

Our Home and Foreign Missionary Societies are well organized and doing excellent work.

Our Ladies Aid Society was organized August, 1907, with a membership of 38. Since then they have earned more than \$600.00. They have recarpeted and repapered the church and put in new "art glass" windows, and paid \$25 each year to the pastoral fund, also assisted the church financially otherwise, and now have nearly \$50 in the treasury. Their work is highly appreciated by the entire membership.



Our church has always been blessed with a well organized and efficient choir. The faithfulness of our young people is praiseworthy and appreciated by the entire meeting.

During the first twenty-five years of the organization of Knightstown meeting we have lost by death fifty-nine members. During the past ten years our loss by death is 56 members, making a total loss of 115 who have died while members of this meeting, since the organization thirty-five years ago. Many of this number's memory will ever be sweet for their beautiful lives and Christian influence. We now have a membership of 285.

Raysville Monthly Meeting of Friends was opened and held at Raysville meeting house, Henry County, Indiana, on the 25th day of 4th month, 1857, agreeably to an extract from Spiceland Quarterly Meeting of Friends held 3rd month 14th, 1857.

The name of Raysville Monthly Meeting was changed to that of Knightstown Monthly Meeting in 5th month 25th, 1895, which is now held at Knightstown instead of Raysville as formerly. It is held on the 4th Seventh day of each month and consists of five different particular or local business meetings, namely: -- Raysville, Grant, Knightstown, Wilkinson and Shirley. The name of Knightstown Preparative Meeting (under the new discipline) was changed to that of Local Business Meeting in 1st month, 23rd, 1902.

Knightstown Monthly Meeting of Friends is tributary to Spiceland Quarterly Meeting which was organized in 3rd month, 1840, which was held at Spiceland, Indiana.

Spiceland Quarterly Meeting is tributary to Indiana Yearly Meeting which is held at Richmond, Indiana, and was organized in 9th month, 1820. This is the largest Yearly Meeting of Friends in the world.

Let us all be faithful unto the end of life's journey and God will give us a crown of life.

Respectfully submitted,

SOPHIA L. KEYS,

Recorder of Knightstown Meeting of Friends.

4th month 23rd, 1911.

P.S. -- The above history was prepared and read by Sophia L. Keys at the service of the 35th anniversary in commemoration of the organization of Knightstown Meeting of Friends, Fourth month 23rd, 1911.

Seth Stafford was present at this meeting and said he wanted to put his seal to the truthfulness of this history.---S. L. K.

# HISTORY OF THE KNIGHTSTOWN CHURCH

## FROM 1911 TO 1976

Esther Cook, a Henry County native, assumed the pastorate of the Knightstown Meeting in 1910. In 1911 the thirty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the meeting was celebrated and heartfelt appreciation for the faithful work accomplished by previous pastors and lay members was given. At the same time concern was expressed that the present and future members remain steadfast in the desire to see God's blessing and to praise Him for all goodness bestowed on the local group. Emory Reese, a noted translator of the Bible, was a speaker at a missionary meeting. Special services were conducted in 1912 by Milo Hinkle and Dalton Lewis resulting in spiritual uplift and a united membership joyful in praise of God and reverent in the desire to do His will.

In 1914 Willis Bond became pastor. Non-participating and non-attending members were encouraged to become active. It was hoped that a more united and dedicated membership could effectively promote church growth and fellowship.

Zeno Doan accepted the call to lead the Knightstown Meeting in 1916. Three trustees were appointed in 1917 that they might work with the finance committee in promoting the interests of the church. In 1919 Raysville, the fourth of the five meetings originally in the Knightstown Meeting, established its own monthly meeting, leaving the Knightstown congregation as the sole business meeting in the Knightstown Monthly Meeting. Zeno Doan's interest in youth attracted several young people who later gave their lives to Christ and became staunch church workers. Social calls were made and spiritual counsel given to those troubled with doubts and fears so that their concerns might be allayed and their lives strengthened through faith and prayer.

J. Edward Hartsuck and his wife, Laura, spent five dedicated years from 1923 to 1928 in service to the Knightstown Meeting. His pastoral report often indicated as many as forty visits to members during a month. Mission work and cottage prayer meetings were his concerns. Since these were the depression years following the first World War, the church often faced financial difficulties and although at times payments were in arrears the debts were never large. Local church expenses and Yearly Meeting assessments were met by a membership united in spiritual belief and determined that their church would not be among those laid down. Membership rolls were reviewed in hopes of generating interest and participation from local people who were non-attenders. The women's missionary society through diligent work met its quoto. Sophie Keys was recognized for her thirty years of service as recorder and her fine work in organizing and preserving the minutes of the Raysville and Knightstown Monthly Meetings. An interesting letter was sent to President Coolidge and our senators and representatives protesting the spending of \$700,000,000 on a battleship. The communication stated that the church did not believe in preparing for war in peace time and cited as an example that William Penn with his Quaker hat and coat had been a better defense against the Indians than a coat of mail and a musket. When Edward Hartsuck's resignation was presented to the monthly meeting, he was asked to reconsider; but after prayerful thought he felt it was time for him to leave. For several months the pastoral committee sought a new minister. Adelbert Wood, a Friends' minister and a member of the Knightstown Meeting, served as temporary pastor for the meeting.

Franklin Chant and his wife, Lillian, answered the call to assume pastoral guidance of the Knightstown Meeting in September, 1929. During his first month he made forty-two pastoral calls.



The dedication of the ministers of this time was certainly evidenced by the many hours they spent in fellowship and worship with individuals of their congregation. The church members were challenged to walk close to God so that His mission might be accomplished and their lives guided into a closer communication with their Master and their fellow man.

George Bird and his wife, Christie, accepted the call to serve the Knightstown Meeting, beginning September 1, 1931. Certainly George Bird was a fervent believer in God and a true disciple, for during the years he served here, his very meager salary was usually in arrears, church work had to be curtailed, and Yearly Meeting assessments were met with great difficulty. Under these adverse circumstances and often serving three or four months at a time without any pay, he continued to exhort his flock to press on to deeper experiences in faith, to strive steadily toward a better life filled with charity and good will, and to praise God for the blessings bestowed upon us. He and his wife made many calls each month and also encouraged their members to visit in fellowship with each other. In the year 1932, he made 386 visits. The attendance at church and Sunday School, though fluctuating from time to time, continued to increase. Adelbert Wood, with the blessing of the local church, visited several churches in the East and in Canada, feeling that God was directing him to be of service. The local meeting cooperated with a traveling minute and through prayer wished him the blessings of the Lord. Even though funds were needed to meet local expenses, much emphasis was placed on missionary work and every effort was made by the women of the church to meet the monthly apportionment. Special recognition was given to Dr. T. R. Woodard following his death in 1937. His many years of faithful service and especially his long tenure as a teacher for young people will long

be remembered. His life was filled with Christian love and compassion for others. On February 14, 1938, a regional meeting on foreign policy of the United States was held at Knightstown. Reverend Harold Fey, Executive Secretary of Fellowship and Reconciliation, spoke. He placed much emphasis on the need of all churches to forget their individual differences and to unite in God's work for peace on earth and fellowship for all men worldwide. George Bird resigned at the close of the church year in 1938. The entire meeting soon felt the loss of this devoted friend who had been their pastor in seven difficult years. George Bird answered God's call to eternal life in June 1939. His wife, Christie, continued with her active participation in the meeting, working with the same devotion she had exhibited as a pastor's wife.

Kenneth and Ruthanna Pickering came to Knightstown from Spiceland in 1938 to serve as our ministers. Although finances had improved since the middle 1930's, and pastor's and janitor's salaries were able to be met, the meeting was often hard pressed to meet Yearly Meeting stock payments. Kenneth Pickering through his emphasis on stewardship helped us to gain financial stability. Both he and his wife were talented musicians, and their contributions in this area plus their fervent dedication as young ministers, created a devotional atmosphere for worship. Several young people who had been associate members felt led to give their lives to Christ. The parsonage and church were redecorated and received much needed electrical and plumbing repair. Because of our entry into the war and the consequent draft, the church pledged to be responsible, as far as possible, financially and spiritually, for any young man who was a conscientious objector. The local church participated in the Christian Public Service organization, commonly known as C. P. S., an organization which, through the work of Albert Copeland, was formed to be of

service to the Friends Church and to the nation in this time of war. Kenneth Pickering accepted a call to a church with a larger membership where he felt he could reach more young people.

Albert Copeland and his wife, Alice, accepted the call to lead our flock in 1943. His zealous interest in the field of home missions and world peace inspired our membership to greater service in these areas. Contributions of money, clothing, and other needed items were collected and several weeks were spent working in the Tennessee mission. The Five Years Meeting voiced a concern over pastors' pensions. The local meeting expressed its agreement and indicated its willingness to cooperate whenever plans were formulated.

John Randolph with his wife, Doris, accepted the charge for our meeting in 1945. At this time the parsonage was extensively redecorated and remodeled, making it far more comfortable and attractive. Much of the work was done by some of our church members indicating improvement in the lay ministry in our group.

Byron Leaser and his wife, Hattie, came to us in 1948. Hattie was indeed an asset to the church and the community. Together they were interested in and successful in promoting church growth both spiritually and numerically. Personal contact by members, rally days, "fill a pew Sunday", loyalty month, bring a neighbor, and contests between classes and individuals, were some of the means used to increase attendance and develop a sense of responsibility for church progress through the work of the laity. Boys' basketball teams, primarily of fourth to sixth grade level, were organized and this method used to bring boys into Sunday School. Many of these came from non-church homes and through this activity boys that would not otherwise have received spiritual or moral guidance were reached. Although many left the church later, the teaching received in their impressionable years was of inestimable personal and community value.

Interest in special projects sponsored by the Yearly Meeting was encouraged. Some of the men donated several days of work in building and remodeling at Quaker Haven. Funds were also raised to aid in the project. The meeting gave money to build a room in the new girls' living quarters at White's Institute. Some individuals also made equal contributions so that our meeting felt that they had indeed shared their worldly possessions with those less fortunate and in doing so had aided in a worthwhile venture in trying to rehabilitate youth who had not had the opportunities our own young people had had. The project to supply mattresses for the living quarters was quite successful. Later contributions were made for the building of the chapel at White's Institute so that an atmosphere for a spiritual life might be created and many young people might be inspired to give their lives to Christ and through Christian living their future would be much brighter than their past. Contributions were made for the establishment of Friends Fellowship Home and the promotion of Earlham School of Religion. Under the leadership of Byron Leaser, a Cub Scout Pack was organized and our church participated in this by furnishing a meeting place for some of the dens and also sponsored Cub Scout Sundays to recognize these boys who through scouting were learning to help others in need. Economic conditions had improved and now our church was able to make repairs and new additions to our physical facilities. The parsonage was insulated, new siding was installed, redecorating accomplished, and a new electric stove was purchased. The growth of our Sunday School necessitated an addition to the church. Rooms which could serve both as Sunday School rooms and for recreational activities were added to the north of the existing building. A basement was designed so it could be used for opening exercises for the children and also as class rooms. The stone for this addition was



hauled by some of the members. Some also donated their labor. This extensive addition created a church building that facilitated the work of the Sunday School as well as making our surroundings pleasant and attractive. The different organizations of the church sponsored and helped finance these and other improvements. The women carpeted and refurnished the middle room. The Quaker Men conducted a campaign to remodel the church auditorium. New pews were installed and the altar and platform were extended to give more space for the choir and organ. Dedicated October 25, 1959, the improvements were designed so that they reflected the simplicity of style in the Quaker tradition and at the same time created an atmosphere that inspired true worship of God.

Among those recognized for outstanding service was Mildred Dreyer who had served for many years as organist and choir director. Emory Cox's resignation, after thirty seven years as treasurer, was accepted with reluctance and our appreciation was expressed for his faithful service. Warren Edward's death came in January of 1958 after having served twelve years as Clerk of the Monthly Meeting which he had conducted in Quakerly manner with much patience and spiritual insight. After sixteen years service to our church and our community Byron Leaser's resignation was accepted with reluctance. He felt he had completed his service in Knightstown and could be of greater service in a new community.

Mervin and Elsie Kilmer came to us from a pastorate in Canada in 1964. He was desirous of continuing his education in theology at the Earlham School of Religion. As times have changed, so have church interests and the services of a minister. Mervin devoted much of his time and effort to helping those mentally or emotionally disturbed. The contributing social problems so disturbing to young people became an object of prime concern. The high school class was vitalized during his ministry



because he talked their language and understood their concerns. Migrant workers, people with marital difficulties, itinerants stranded in the community, the unemployed, and families in need of welfare, all received needed help and encouragement. His resignation came because of his desire to be more active in community counseling.

In 1972, Keith Mardock and his wife, Joyce Pickering Mardock, accepted Knightstown as their first pastorate. They had served in mission work in Africa and had been active in lay work but felt called upon to enter into the ministry. Both he and his wife were talented vocalists and through the use of this ability an atmosphere for spiritual inspiration and reflection was created. His resignation came after three years because of his desire to continue his education in order to more effectively promote programs for Christian living.

Gene Lewis and his wife, Carolyn, came to us from neighboring Carthage in July, 1975. In the few months he has served the Knightstown Meeting, church attendance has increased and his policy of monthly Sunday night suppers for fellowship and family worship have been quite successful. It is hoped that the church will grow and move forward spiritually under his leadership.

In 1975 the total membership of the Meeting was 210. The average attendance of the Sunday School was 68. There are four adult classes, the oldest of which is the Quaker Class. Originally this class was organized in 1915 by Elizabeth Woodard and Laura Zion. George Bird was teacher for several years and brought the attendance up to thirty or forty. One present member of the class, Myron Strattan, has been a regular attender since it was founded. The youth Sunday School classes have varied in number and organization according to the number of children enrolled at the time. When the attendance has been large, the boys and girls have been divided into separate classes. Opening exercises for these classes are held in the basement.

The music of the meeting has been of the highest quality. The faithful cooperation of the volunteer choir has been remarkable. Many of the high school age have been active in the group. Among the choir directors have been Naomi Pyle, Jessie Pierce, Mary Hartsuck, Mildred Dreyer, and Joyce Wiatt. Accompanists have been Margaret Wood, Lucile Strattan, Mildred Dreyer, Edna Hopkins, Donna Carter, Linda Dukeman, Katherine Waits, and Robin Richey. The meeting has enjoyed and has derived spiritual inspiration from several talented vocalists, instrumentalists, and musical groups. The musical instruments used in the meeting have ranged from a small portable organ purchased before 1914 and still operable to the electric two manual organ of today. The first electric organ was purchased in 1947 and was replaced by a Conn organ in 1967. The meeting has had several pianos many of which have been given to the church.

At one time two women's organizations operated in the Knightstown Meeting. One was the Missionary Society, which group even in the depression years through its consecrated work managed to meet the financial assessments placed upon it. The other women's organization was the Ladies Aid which was founded in 1907 for the purpose of aiding financially as well as spiritually the local church and the community. Later in 1948 the two organizations combined to form the United Society of Friends' Women following the pattern established by the Indiana Yearly Meeting and the Friends' United Meeting. The new organization has continued the support of foreign and home missions in addition to placing much emphasis on the work of the local meeting thus generating church growth spiritually. They have paid monthly light and water bills, equipped the kitchen, furnished the fellowship room of the meeting house, and shared in many church sponsored projects. Their funds have been derived from serving dinners for community groups,

from rummage sales, membership contributions, and special project sales, including a cook book. There is a Christian service group which meets frequently to sew for missionary projects. Christie Bird needs to be recognized for her work in this group since she was very active in making children's dresses and quilts for those in need locally and in response to calls from the Yearly Meeting.

At one time the men of the church were organized as a Quaker Men's Group. Father and Son banquets were held annually, boys' basketball teams were sponsored, and other church activities promoted. In 1957 the Quaker Men promoted the project for the improvement of the meeting room. New and more comfortable pews were installed and the old platform and pulpit were replaced with a larger platform and a new pulpit all of matched woods. The project was finished in 1959 and has added much to the beauty and comfort of the church.

There have been many youth organizations in the church. The first Christian Endeavor was formed in 1889. A Junior Christian Endeavor was established in 1892. Many years later Kenneth Pickering started another youth group for high school students. Since that time the youth of the church have been organized but have been more active at times than at other times. Albert Copeland met with elementary members in 1944. Through stamp collecting he guided them into a better understanding of foreign countries.

Several ministers have effectively encouraged young people to attend Quaker Haven Camp and become involved in other state and national religious dominated organizations. As a lay member, Myron Strattan has given his services as a counselor at camp and throughout his life spent many hours promoting moral and religious training among our youth. The meeting has attempted to encourage Sunday School attendance and to promote character building among the boys by sponsoring basketball teams. During the ministry of Zeno Doan and under the guidance of Joe

Barnard, our boys participated in a local church basketball league. Under the leadership of Byron Leaser, the Quaker basketball team competed against teams of other churches in Knightstown and surrounding communities. Trophies won by our boys are on display in the church social room. At the present time, our young people are actively encouraging Christian living among their peers and emphasizing recreational activities to promote church interest. They have sponsored events such as hay rides, skating parties, bowling games, and ski weekends. Six attended the National Youth Quake in California in December 1975.

The church has been the recipient over the years of several bequests. Some have been left for specific purposes or current needs. The largest gratuity came from the Katherine Holt estate. Valued at over \$35,000, it was invested and only the interest is to be used in the promotion of church activities. Large or small, these gifts have been made in the spirit of the Widow's Mite and attest to a deep spiritual life within the church and the feeling that we are indeed our brother's keeper.

To the best of our knowledge, we have at present just two active members who are direct descendants of a charter member. These are Paul Cox and his son, Richard, who are descended from Rebecca J. (Kearns) Midkiff.

Since this is our nation's bicentennial year, we rejoice in the fact that this is our centennial year and we note with added pleasure that our present building is the original building. Although it has had additions and improvements over the years, it still serves our congregation in the same modest manner it did the founders. Erect and firm, the physical structure meets our needs. It is our prayer and concern that we, the members, come to worship and to praise God with the same fervent belief that prompted these early men and

women to establish this church. May the blessings of the Lord be with us as we rededicate ourselves in the faith of our charter group.

P.S. -- This history has been written as the Knightstown Monthly Meeting prepares to observe its centennial in April of 1976. The minutes of the monthly meetings since 1911 have been the primary source of our information.

Lucille and Myron Strattan  
Marian and Joseph White





